

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The Office Action mailed February 22, 2006 has been carefully considered. Reconsideration in view of the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Claim Status and Amendment to the Claims

Claims 1-5, 11-12, 15-16, 22-24, 34, 39, 48 and 52 are now pending.

Claims 1, 15, 16, 22-24, 34 and 39 are allowed.

Claims 6-10, 13-14, 17-21, 25-33, 35-38, 40-47, 49-51, and 53 have been canceled, without prejudice, by this amendment.

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the indication of allowance of claims 1, 15, 16, 22-24, 34, and 39.

Request for Rejoinder of Non-elected Species Claims

Claims 2-14, 17-21, 25-33, 35-38, 40-53 were withdrawn from consideration as the result of an earlier restriction requirement. The Examiner alleges, in the Office Action, that claims 2-14, 17-21, 25-33, 35-38, and 40-53 must be canceled in order to place this application in condition for allowance.

However, claims 2-5 and 11-12 depend from claim 1, and claims 48 and 52 depend from claim 15, where claims 1 and 15 are allowed generic claims. Where restriction was required between independent or distinct products, or between independent or distinct processes, and all claims directed to an elected invention are allowable, any restriction requirement between the elected invention and any nonelected

invention that depends from or otherwise requires all the limitations of an allowable claim should be withdrawn. M.P.E.P, §821.04(a). Applicant is entitled to consideration of non-elected species claims in addition to elected species if all the non-elected species claims are written in dependent form or otherwise include all the limitations of an allowed generic claim. 37 C.F.R. §1.141.

Accordingly, it is respectfully asserted that claims 2-5, 11-12, and 48-52 are also now in condition for allowance.

Please note that claims 2-5 and 11-12 were amended, in the previous response, to more clearly recite the network level structure in conformity with the amended language of claim 1.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully asserted that all of the pending claims 1-12, 15-16, 22-24, 34, 38, and 52 are now in condition for allowance.

Conclusion

It is believed that this Amendment places the above-identified patent application into condition for allowance. Early favorable consideration of this Amendment is earnestly solicited.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees which may be required, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account Number 50-1698.

Respectfully submitted,
THELEN REID & PRIEST, LLP

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Masako Ando
Ltd. Rec. No. L0016

Thelen Reid & Priest LLP
P.O. Box 640640
San Jose, CA 95164-0640
Tel. (408) 292-5800
Fax. (408) 287-8040

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